

Ten Tips to Move From “Revisions Needed” to Resubmission

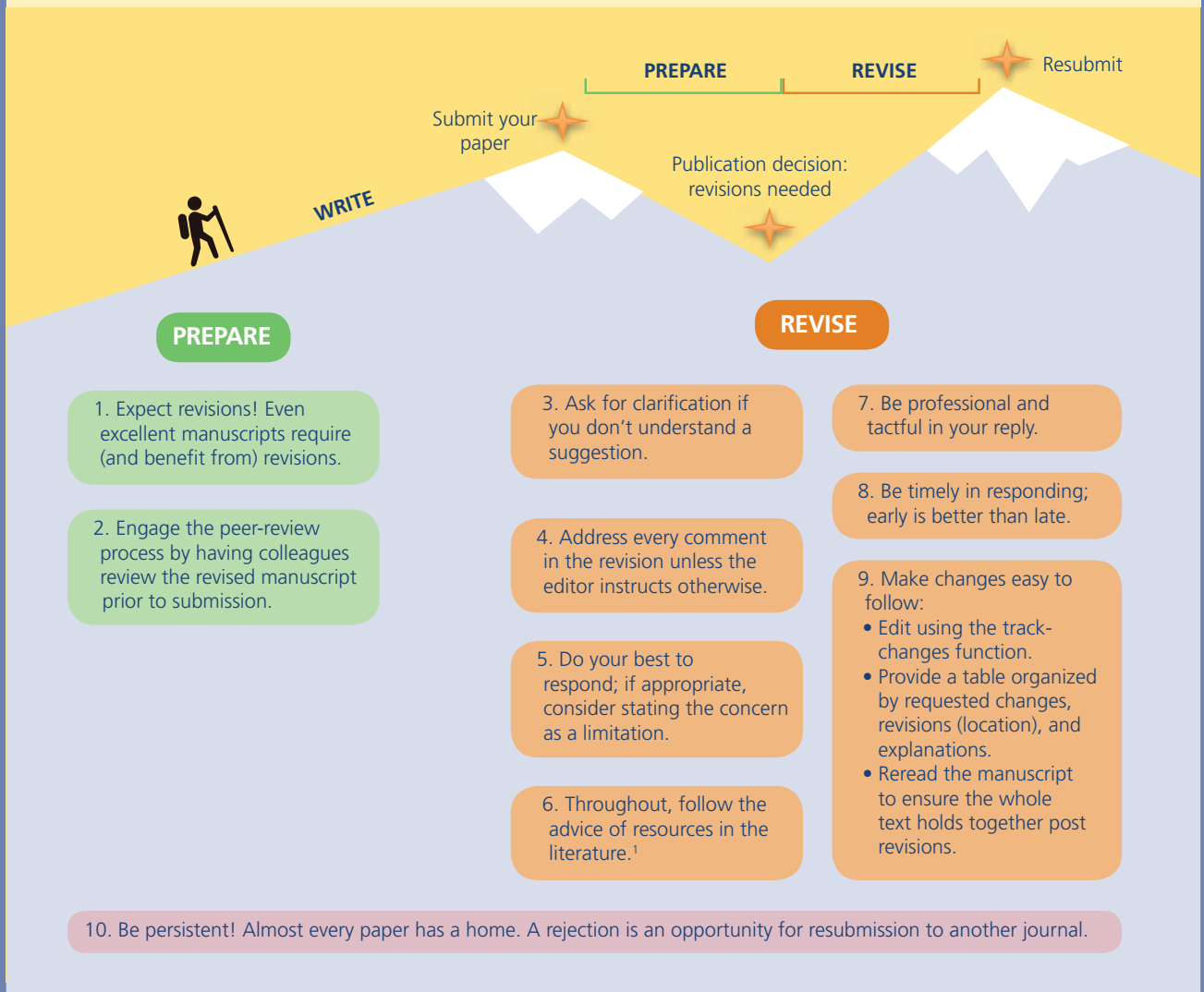
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Authors may struggle when they receive a decision letter that requires revisions to their manuscript.

Reframing the submission and review process to align with climbing a mountain helps authors visualize the process as challenging, but rewarding. There are three phases of the climb:

- Write: writing your paper for the initial submission,
- Prepare: preparing yourself for feedback, and
- Revise: revising your paper based on feedback received.

The 10 tips below relate to the “prepare” and “revise” portion of the climb. These tips frame the revision process as an opportunity to transform and improve one’s manuscript.



PREPARE

1. Expect revisions! Even excellent manuscripts require (and benefit from) revisions.

2. Engage the peer-review process by having colleagues review the revised manuscript prior to submission.

REVISE

3. Ask for clarification if you don’t understand a suggestion.

4. Address every comment in the revision unless the editor instructs otherwise.

5. Do your best to respond; if appropriate, consider stating the concern as a limitation.

6. Throughout, follow the advice of resources in the literature.¹

7. Be professional and tactful in your reply.

8. Be timely in responding; early is better than late.

9. Make changes easy to follow:

- Edit using the track-changes function.
- Provide a table organized by requested changes, revisions (location), and explanations.
- Reread the manuscript to ensure the whole text holds together post revisions.

10. Be persistent! Almost every paper has a home. A rejection is an opportunity for resubmission to another journal.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, the Department of the Navy, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

Reference:

1. Durning SJ, Carline JD, eds. Review Criteria for Research Manuscripts. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: Association of American Medical Colleges; 2015.

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